

Raven's Herald

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Courage and Honor

July, 597

Horned Creatures Sack Coombe

On the morning of June the 30th, a large force comprised of strange horned creatures that are believed to have been sighted previously near the Falconrest forest, marched north and sacked the town of Coombe in the Barony of Eastwyck. While local militia forces were little to no match for these well armed creatures, now identified as Minotaurs, they gallantly gave defense in time to evacuate the city. Alerted by Lieutenant Ashford of the Eastwyck Rangers, Baroness Regent Bailiwick Stormhaven immediately rushed to assess the strange situation within her Barony. On July the 2nd, Baroness Bailiwick returned to the Capitol city to report to His Grace, Duke Alaric Malinruin, with regards to the size and composition of this new threat. His Grace immediately ordered Major Maximillian Greystone and a contingent of Ducal Forces from the front lines of the Sessuar war to redirect their energies and investigate. Major Greystone immediately proceeded west to Coombe to parlay with the

leader of these creatures. The Raven's Herald has yet to learn of the outcome of these negotiations, but will report as soon as we have word.

Major Greystone returned to provide reports to His Grace on July the 7th, holding consultations with His Grace and Baroness Bailiwick. Major Greystone was then immediately dispatched back to the Southern front of the war after several consequential defeats on the part of the Ducal forces (see accompanying Herald article).

The Raven's Herald is happy to report that all citizens of Coombe were safely evacuated and loss of life was minimal, with all 100 members of the local militia successfully resurrecting.

Baroness Bailiwick has issued a statement that all citizens are to remain at a safe distance from Coombe until further notices. No other hostile actions have been seen from the attacking force.

Sessuar Attack Towns of Gum and Mallow Pantherghast!

The Sessuar Southern Army continues to once again force back Ducal forces commanded by Baron Derek Northridge of Westmarch, capturing the towns of both Gum and Mallow in that Barony. Further tightening the noose surrounding the Capitol city of Ravenholt. The fierce battles for both towns resulted in great losses to the enemy, although they were successful in driving Ducal forces back from the last defensive positions before the Capital. Baron Northridge gave little quarter during the fights, and praised the men who fought beside him, yet on the evening of July the 5th, or-

dered a general retreat as it became apparent the outnumbering Sessuar Southern Armies could potentially encircle his troops.

"It's difficult to continue to fall back when we have little room left to do so. The forces of Ravenholt fought valiantly and it was an honor to stand beside them. It appears now that he last great battle of Ravenholt will be here, at the Capital City," Baron Northridge was quoted as saying, exhaustedly. The general in command of the Sessuar's Southern force appeared to be resupplying his forces before a final push towards Ravenholt City.

His Grace Duke Alaric has further ordered that the southern gates to Ravenholt city be sealed and reinforced in anticipation of the upcoming siege. While long lines of refugees continue to enter the city through the eastern gates, it is expected that His Grace will prepare to evacuate those in outlying farms nearest Ravenholt City.

All those not able-bodied enough to fight have been called to assist in preparing defenses to aid the defense of the last stronghold of the Duchy.

On the night of June 9th, an old terror was unleashed on Ravenholt once more and it took a heavy toll before it was destroyed. As a result of the time ripples occurring in Ravenholt, the Pantherghast, a creature that feeds on the spirits of elves, was freed again.

Years ago, a group of adventurers sneaking into Lankirin's cabin accidentally released the Pantherghast. The battle proved to be one of the momentous events from the past that the people of Ravenholt needed to re-enact, and so a group was gathered for the

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Pantherghast...cont'd from p1

task. Just as it happened the first time, only non-humans were able to go on the quest, due to a proscription against humans on the cabin. Two members of the original party were in town to take up their old task again: Constantine Lykos, and Jatrina Sartosa. Accompanying them were Vorsing, Alladon, Havalock Thornbird, and Archer

Once the six warriors made their way through traps and warder glyphs to the final room where the Pantherghast had been unleashed before, they found the circle that they knew the Pantherghast would form in, and a magical blade. As with the first time that this battle was fought, a wall slammed down the moment that someone stepped into the circle, separating the party. After the pantherghast formed, Jatrina and Havalock delivered several of their most powerful blows to the creature, but they, and Archer, the third elf trapped within the wall were paralyzed by the creature's claws before they could finish it. Fortunately, the wall raised again before it could obliterate them, and the other three elves joined the fray.

The Pantherghast escaped into our time. The six warriors healed themselves and followed, hunting it through the woods to try to prevent it from reaching the town and preying upon elves. Unfortunately, Constantine Lykos, and Alladon both fell to its claws and were obliterated. Constantine failed to resurrect. The first time he faced the Pantherghast in Lankirin's cabin, Constantine ran from this being of primal terror, leaving companions to die, but by chasing it tenaciously through the woods with little support, knowing that his spirit was too weak to survive an Obliteration, and by dying heroically in the defense of all the elves of this duchy, he more than redeemed himself.

The Pantherghast escaped its pursuers, but the following night the people of Ravenholt were more prepared. Havalock Thornbird organized an ambush consisting of a large portion of the town's warriors. As soon as the elves sensed the return of the Pantherghast, the ambush force lay in wait between two cabins while Alladon, Vorsing, and Archer went out to act as bait. Once they goaded the Pantherghast into chasing them, they fled straight to the waiting horde of townsfolk. With a great roar, they all sprung to the attack, chasing the creature to the edge of the wood line where it was finally destroyed.

Are You the Best?

...At making traps to protect wares? At passing locks? At bypassing those traps? I am seeking the best at each, and I will pay in GOLD for the most capable. Visit the tavern for details.-
Cyrus Harding.

Clockworks Battle Sessuar; Fail in the Attempt

A force of 200 clockworks engaged and assaulted the Sessuar forces holding the estate of Kragen's Helm in an attempt to move towards Longhope Castle. After suffering consequential losses, they temporarily took back the estate, and were holding against the onslaught of Sessuar reinforcements for nearly a week before the sheer numbers of Sessai overwhelmed even the strongest of them.

Harbinger himself along with his greater clockwork bodyguards leads the defense against the invading armies, only to fall within moments of breaching the gates of the estate. All attempts at communications to those within the city of Kragen's Helm have been futile, as the Sessuar have kept a constant assault upon the estate. Scattered reports from the few remaining scouts in the area present a bleak picture as Clockwork parts are said to be piling up outside the gates, and speculation abound that these parts may yet become fodder for the Black Robed Mages' nefarious rituals if they decide to create particularly heinous golum constructs.

Deathknight Appears

The spring brought a strange sight to Ravenholt- a powerful Deathknight surrounded by minions took to the field, but left without harming anyone, or being attacked himself.

The deathknight, one Stephen Cabbot, has been known to Ravenholt for some time, but has taken only a few actions to harm citizens. It is rumored that he has spoken privately with several townsfolk about unknown concerns. He stormed into town on the night of May 24th apparently enraged about a letter he had received from a woman he believed to be his former wife. Baron Moonwind confronted him in the middle of town, and spoke with him at some length, after which Cabbot departed peacefully.

Reporters Wanted

The Raven's Herald is looking for literate, knowledgeable people to act as reporters and correspondents, providing information and details on major events to be used in articles for the Herald. We are also looking for people willing to be long-term contacts in the various groups in town who would supply commentary on events concerning their group when asked. If you are interested in a position as a reporter or Group liaison, contact Editor-In-Chief, Lorel Westglade at the Raven's Herald Offices. Per-article pay structure for all standard stories, several salaried War Correspondent positions available.

Civilized Orcs Leave Mark on Town

This July, a number of strange orcs appeared in Ravenholt. They were unusual not in their appearance, but in their behavior- for they seemed very intelligent, polite, well-dressed, and well-equipped, rather than violent and dim-witted like the orcs Ravenholt knows so well. They claimed to come from an alternate dimension where orcs were citizens of Ravenholt much like other races. They asked for help in returning to their own realm, which they had not meant to leave.

It soon became clear from astrological portents when and where it would be possible to do the ritual to return the orcs to their own world. In order for them to return, however, a certain balance between the alternate realities had to be maintained; the orcs had to each have someone helping them in the ritual who was as close a match in training, skills, and

personality as possible. Several townsfolk helped these orcs to maintain good relations with the town, and obtain what they needed for the ritual, most notably the court of Westmarch.

These orcs from elsewhere encountered our native orcs in the forest. By their report, the local orcs almost worshipped them due to their superior training and intelligence. Some of the alternate orcs tried to use their influence to calm the local orcs and encourage them to be less warlike, but unfortunately, one of their number decided that he wished to remain in Ravenholt and be showered with rank and privilege by the native orcs. This orc whose first name the Raven's Herald was not able to learn, but whose last name was Deathstorm, refused to help in the ritual to return them home.

When the first of two possible times came to do the ritual,

Deathstorm led a large force of native orcs in an attack on the town, though Baron Johann of Capulus had ordered that the ritual not take place until the second chance on the following day for security reasons. Deathstorm cast the spell from which he takes his name-it was similar to magic storm, save that he hurled unlimited Death spells rather than small bolts of eldritch energy. Despite this power he was captured and his minions were killed.

The next day, the townsfolk and the otherworldly orcs gathered to perform the ritual. While the orcs and their matches stood in the ritual circle including an unconscious and unwilling Deathstorm. Many warriors assembled to defend the circle from any interruption that would cause dangerous backlash. The circle was attacked constantly by Lizardmen from the nearby

lake; they had apparently made a deal of some kind with the native orcs. In the end, the ritual was successful, and the friendly orcs said their thanks and were returned to their own dimension. Deathstorm apparently resisted the ritual, remaining in Ravenholt. The Herald was unable to learn his current whereabouts, but presumably he is being held in a secure place.

Before his capture, Deathstorm succeeded in creating a permanent Earth circle in the woods. The aggressive local orc tribes who supported him are presumed to have members invested in this circle. The orcs' visit will certainly have long-reaching effects on our world; it remains to be seen whether the more friendly orcs' claiming influence or Deathstorm's incendiary one will win out in the end.

Brood Queen at Large!!

While Ravenholt slept in the early morning hours of Sunday, July 6th, a new Brood Queen ripped its way out of Baroness Regent Bailiwick's chest within the ward of Eastwyck Hall. The Baroness had apparently been infected some weeks ago when the people of Ravenholt stormed a Brood Queen's lair through a Time Ripple. The deadly creature then slew all of the Baroness' Court members

silently in their sleep, transforming many of them into Brood on the spot. The Brood then fled town to hide in the woods.

The defenders of Ravenholt soon awakened and rallied together as this grim news spread swiftly through the town. Soon large numbers of seasoned warriors were methodically searching the woods about town. All of the transformed Eastwyck members were found

and mercifully killed. A small number of other brood were found as well, proving that the Queen was already infecting other prey. The Queen herself presumably found some better hiding place to go to ground, for despite diligent and thorough search efforts, she was not found.

This Brood Queen is still on the loose and may well have established a hive by this point.

It is believed to be even more of a danger than previous Brood Queens that Ravenholt has faced, as it is extremely stealthy and apparently very intelligent.

Any citizens sighting Brood or hearing any news of the Brood Queen's lair should inform their liege at once. All people of Ravenholt should be very cautious of this menace.

Public Notices

The ARC is looking for Alchemy components. Will pay appropriate prices for them. See Fallon.

To the People of Ravenholt:

I know many of you are not happy with the ways of the nobility at this time, but due to the war with the Sessuar, this is the worst possible time for an uprising to occur. We must be united on all fronts for us to win the battle against an outside enemy, only we may deal with the problems in our Duchy. -Tree-watcher.

Weaponsmiths of Lowtown: I am interested in buying a forge for common use by those smiths currently without access. Any interested individuals who would like to donate funds to make this possible should contact me the weekend of the commoner's tourney. Ask around, people know how to find me.-Algorian.

Wanted: Any information concerning an elderly woman who resurrected at the Ravenholt Healer's Circle on the morning of the 20th. I understand that she was escorted home, and would like to discern where that was. Notables: She had a serious memory lapsing. She was collecting weapons for her town. She had a tattoo on her left inner wrist. -Alrand Coolane.

To the Baljar Gypsies: It is time for you to take a break from the gaje that you are so close with and are becoming like. You don't openly welcome and treat other gypsies with respect or proper hospitality. You are settled in freeholds, and even are Nobility. Remember the struggle of the gypsies. It is time to remember your roots. Find them in the stories of the gypsy people. Remember who you are, separate from the gaje.

War-Nok of the clan Goreknuckle: Please contact me. I have a proposal for you that utilizes your talents. -Alrand Coolane

HELP! I am in desperate need of a transform to Elf or transform to Sarr scroll (others may be adequate, but not Human or monster.) I will pay well for its use, or to buy it. I can be reached through Squire Xen of the Ducal Household, or by way of Valthian, Sir Eathan, or Sir Wyatt of Arkham. Time is running out, even information will be greatly appreciated. -Jason Aaron of Myanthea

Inert Poisons

The recent magical upheaval has caused many changes in the creation of poisons, and alchemists throughout Ravenholt have been researching day and night to try to rediscover lost recipes.

Recently however, poisoners have reported difficulties in mixing poisons from components gathered in Ravenholt. Their usual poison creation in their labs seems to work normally, but mixes made from found components seem inert or unfinished. So far there seem to be few clues as to how to remedy this problem.

In Memory of the Fallen

The Sessuar continued to take a high toll this past season. In the Duchy of Ravenholt, farmers, citizens, and members of the local army lost many of their forces. They fought long and hard to defend our homes and lands. The people of Ravenholt hear about their friends and nobles that made efforts during the war, but many of the common folk are not accounted for. Though some of the Duchy's attempts to hold back the Sessuar are successful, the men and women who fought paid the ultimate price and took their final deaths. The following is an incomplete listing and account of these people.

Army and Militia:

Captain Beth Yambu; Captain Malacom Henthrow, Captain Ben Perejenke; Captain Jonathan Stormcatcher; Lt. Zoltan Hedmark; Lt. Berslum Still; Sgt. Amintor Boshrine; Sgt. Honan Sweetstill; Sgt. Keneth Schack; Privates Enos and Brac Bajourn, Ryan Greenwood, Sarra Wodgret, Krystyn and Gill Crow, Kacy Aynscow, Kaz O'Neal, Noel O'Rourke, Kenn Potts, Tasha Blackmane, Joseph Lubman, Zax Lyndsay, and Wassy Breadmere.

Commoners:

Jord the Miller, Randel Smith, Wern Candler, Drenor Ratcatcher, The Triak Family, 11 young men and women of the Jongast Family, Sean Lanop, Payty Cornwall, Arther Termit, Gladius Skcot, Seigfried Fafnir, Lincoln the Green, Domini Loxley, Jose De Braga, Garrtey Goshawk, Targe Macassar, Sgian Dubh, Crecy Poitiers, Talon Landsknecht, Haws Dagesse, Holbein Moros, Erik Rigdon, Richman Gamble, Boyle Leech, Denix Iberia.

The rest of the military and civilian forces that fell I have yet to receive names for, though their spirits are still with us, and will always be remembered for the service that they did for their lands.

Sincerely, Tyger-Ty Darkwind
Darkwind Funeral Parlor